

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-44 (Canceled)

44/

1 45. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article, comprising:
a liquid-permeable layer;
a substantially liquid-impermeable layer; and
an absorbent body between the liquid-permeable layer and the
substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
the absorbent body comprising ~~a flowable~~ an absorbent material
which ~~remains able to flow up to a water absorption of 10.5 grams per gram~~
~~flowable~~ absorbs 10 ml or more of water per gram of absorbent material and
absorbs said water under conditions where no volume expansion is possible.

2 46. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45,
wherein the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material comprises absorbent particles.

3 47. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 46,
wherein the absorbent particles comprise spherical particles.

4 48. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 46,²
wherein the absorbent particles have a diameter of about 100-2000 microns.

5 49. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 46,²
wherein the absorbent particles have a diameter of about 200-800 microns.

6 50. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45,
wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises polymethylene urea.

7 51. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 50,⁴
wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about one third by weight of
the flowable absorbent material.

8 52. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 50,⁶
wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about one half by weight of the
flowable absorbent material.

9 53. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 50,⁴
wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about two thirds by weight of
the flowable absorbent material.

10 ✓ 54. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about 80% by weight of the flowable absorbent material.

11 55. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the flowable absorbent material consists essentially of the polymethylene urea.

✓ 56. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea is substantially free of ether groups and formaldehyde.

13 57. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises a superabsorbent material.

14 58. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 57, wherein the superabsorbent material comprises a polyacrylate.

15 59. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the absorbent body further comprises a fibrous matrix, and the flowable absorbent material is disposed within the matrix.

16 ~~60~~. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~48~~,¹⁵ wherein the absorbent body further comprises at least one care substance.

17 61. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~60~~,¹⁶ wherein the care substance comprises a material selected from extracts of aloe vera, marigold, chamomile, and combinations thereof.

18 62. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article, comprising:
a substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
an absorbent body connected to the substantially liquid-impermeable layer in a central region of the substantially liquid-impermeable layer; and
a liquid permeable layer over a side of the absorbent body opposite the substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
the absorbent body comprising ~~a flowable~~ an absorbent material which ~~remains able to flow up to a water absorption of 10.5 grams per gram~~ flowable absorbs 10 ml or more of water per gram of absorbent material and absorbs said water under conditions where no volume expansion is possible.

19 63. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~,¹⁸ wherein the absorbent body and substantially liquid-impermeable layer are connected using an adhesive.

¹⁸
20 ~~64~~. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~,
wherein the absorbent body and substantially liquid-impermeable layer are
connected using one or more seams.

¹⁸
21 ~~65~~. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~,
wherein the absorbent body further comprises a secondary storage layer including
a soft absorbent material.

²² ~~66~~ ²¹ (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~65~~,
wherein the soft absorbent material comprises a material selected from coform
materials, airlaid materials, tissue cotton-wools, and combinations thereof.

²⁶
27 ~~67~~. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~65~~,
wherein the soft absorbent material comprises a nonwoven material selected from
spunbond fabrics, carded webs, and combinations thereof.

¹⁵
24 ~~68~~. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~,
wherein the absorbent body further comprises a fibrous matrix, and the flowable
absorbent material is disposed within the matrix.

²⁵69. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ²⁴~~68~~, wherein the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material is disposed substantially homogeneously within the matrix.

²⁴70. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ¹⁸~~62~~, wherein the absorbent body further comprises two or more layers of a fibrous material, and the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material is disposed between the layers of fibrous material.

²¹71. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ²⁴~~68~~, wherein the fibrous matrix comprises a material selected from cellulose, a cellulose/polypropylene mixture, a coform material, and combinations thereof.

²⁸72. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ²⁴~~70~~, wherein the two or more layers of fibrous material comprise a material selected from cellulose, a cellulose/polypropylene mixture, a coform material, and combinations thereof.

29 ~~73~~. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 68, wherein the absorbent body comprises the fibrous material and ~~flowable~~ absorbent material in a weight ratio of about 99-75% fibrous material to about 1-25% ~~flowable~~ absorbent material.

30 ~~74~~. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ²⁹~~73~~, wherein the weight ratio is about 95-80% fibrous material to about 5-20% ~~flowable~~ absorbent material.

31 ~~75~~. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ²⁹~~73~~, wherein the weight ratio is about 90-85% fibrous material to about 10-15% ~~flowable~~ absorbent material.

32 ~~76~~. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ¹⁸~~62~~, wherein the absorbent body further comprises at least one care substance.

33 ~~77~~. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ³²~~76~~, wherein the care substance comprises a material selected from extracts of aloe vera, marigold, chamomile, and combinations thereof.

34 78. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 76,³²
wherein the care substance is enclosed in microcapsules.

34 79. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 78,³⁹
wherein the care substance is releaseable from the microcapsules in response to
heat or pressure.

34 80. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 82,¹⁸
wherein the flowable absorbent material is treated with a substance selected from
bactericidal, fungicidal and viricidal substances, and combinations thereof.

34 81. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 80,³⁴
wherein the substance comprises a bactericidal substance selected from
chlorinated levulinic acid, alkyldimethylbenzylammonium halogenides, and
combinations thereof.

82. (Canceled)

39 83. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 18, 82,
wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises absorbent particles.

40 84. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 39, 83,
wherein the absorbent particles comprise spherical particles.

41 85. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 39, 83,
wherein the spherical particles have a diameter of about 100-2000 microns.

42 86. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 39, 83,
wherein the spherical particles have a diameter of about 200-800 microns.

43 87. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 18, 82,
wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises polymethylene urea.

44 88. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 43, 87,
wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least one third of the flowable
absorbent material.

45 89. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ⁴³87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least one half of the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material.

46 90. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ⁴³87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least two thirds of the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material.

47 91. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ⁴³87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least 80% of the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material.

48 92. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim ⁴³87, wherein the ~~flowable~~ absorbent material consists essentially of the polymethylene urea.

49 93. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ⁴³87, wherein the polymethylene urea is substantially free of ether groups and formaldehyde.

50 94. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 62,¹⁸ wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises a superabsorbent material.

51 95. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 94,⁵⁸ wherein the superabsorbent material comprises a polyacrylate.

52 96. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 62¹⁸ having a length and a width, wherein the absorbent body comprises at least one core which contains the flowable absorbent material, the core having a length that is less than or equal to the length of the absorbent article, and a width that is less than or equal to the width of the absorbent article.

53 97. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 62,¹⁸ wherein the absorbent body comprises at least two chambers, and at least one wall between the chambers.

54 98. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 97,⁵³ wherein the wall is aligned in a longitudinal direction of the absorbent article.

55 99. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 97,⁵³ wherein the wall is aligned in a transverse direction of the absorbent article.

52 100. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 97, comprising at least one wall aligned in a longitudinal direction of the absorbent article and at least one wall aligned in a transverse direction of the absorbent article.

57 101. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 96, wherein the core comprises a plurality of chambers.

58 102. (Currently Amended) A hygiene article, comprising:
a liquid-permeable layer;
a substantially liquid-impermeable layer; and
an absorbent body between the liquid-permeable layer and the substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
the absorbent body comprising ~~a flowable~~ an absorbent material which ~~remains able to flow up to a water absorption of 10.5 grams per gram~~ flowable absorbs 10 ml or more of water per gram of absorbent material and absorbs said water under conditions where no volume expansion is possible.

58 103. (Previously Presented) The hygiene article of Claim 102, comprising a feminine hygiene article.

~~60~~ 104. (Previously Presented) The hygiene article of Claim ~~102~~⁵⁸,
comprising a sanitary napkin.

~~61~~ 105. (Previously Presented) The hygiene article of Claim ~~102~~⁵⁸,
comprising a panty liner.

~~62~~ 106. (Previously Presented) The hygiene article of Claim ~~102~~⁵⁸,
wherein the liquid-permeable layer comprises a central aperture.

~~63~~ 107. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~45~~¹,
comprising a diaper.

~~64~~ 108. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~45~~¹,
comprising an incontinence pad.

~~65~~ 109. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~¹⁰,
comprising a feminine hygiene article.

Serial No.: 09/402,059

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• ~~110~~¹¹⁸. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~⁶²,
comprising a diaper.

• ~~62~~⁶². (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim ~~62~~¹⁸,
comprising an incontinence pad.